

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6959

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 4264

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PK, US, AF, PEPR

SUBJECT: PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO GENERAL ZIA

1. GOP IS OF COURSE INTENSELY WORRIED BY DEVELOPMENTS IN AFGHAN-ISTAN AND HAS CAUSE TO BE. APART FROM THE GENERAL INTENSIFICATION OF PAK INSECURITY WHICH COULD RESULT FROM A PRO-SOVIET COMMUNIST REGIME ON ITS NORTHWESTERN BORDER, GOP ALSO FEARS REVIVAL OF PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE, OR AT A MINIMUM, A REFUSAL OF NEW AFGHAN REGIME TO HONOR DAOUD'S APPARENT COMMITMENT TO A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OF THAT QUESTION. IN LONGER RUN PAKS WORRY ABOUT AGE-OLD SPECTRE OF SOV EFFORTS TO GET A PORT ON THE INDIAN OCEAN.

2. THERE IS VERY LITTLE WE CAN OR SHOULD DO TO REASSURE PAKS ABOUT FUTURE AFGHAN POLICIES AND ACTIONS. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, USEFUL THINGS WE CAN DO TO BOLSTER PAK SELF-CONFIDENCE AND ALLAY SOME OF THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT USG FRIENDSHIP WITH PAKISTAN WHICH IS LIKELY TO BE MORE CLOSELY SCRUTINIZED BY SOME IN GOP IN WAKE OF KABUL COUP. FULLY REALIZE IT WILL BE A DELICATE TASK TO GIVE REASSURANCE TO PAK'S WITHOUT (A) RAISING UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS HERE OR (B) CREATING IN AFGHANISTAN A FEELING THAT WE ARE PREPARING A PAK THREAT TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN KABUL.

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3. TODAY'S DISCUSSION OF RECOGNITION ISSUE WAS A GOOD STEP. FURTHER SUCH DISCUSSIONS AS WE MAKE OUR RECOGNITION DECISIONS WILL ALSO HELP. BUT I RECOMMEND IN ADDITION THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SEND GENERAL ZIA A BRIEF PRIVATE MESSAGE ASSURING HIM OF OUR CONCERN OVER THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND OUR DESIRE TO MAINTAIN A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE GOP ON THEIR IMPLICATIONS. A PROPOSED TEXT FOLLOWS:

4. QUOTE I HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS IN AFGHANISTAN WITH INTENSE INTEREST, AS I KNOW YOU HAVE. THE CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN KABUL MAY OF COURSE HAVE SERIOUS LONG-TERM IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STABILITY AND SECURITY OF SOUTH ASIA, TO WHICH BOTH OUR GOVERNMENTS HAVE LONG BEEN DEDICATED. THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE DIRECTION AND ORIENTATION OF THE NEW REGIME IN KABUL WHICH WE CANNOT YET ANSWER. I WANT YOU TO KNOW, HOWEVER, OF MY GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING INTEREST IN AND DEDICATION TO THE STABILITY AND WELL-BEING OF SOUTH ASIA, AND THE CENTRAL ROLE PAKISTAN PLAYS IN THAT AREA. WE WILL CONTINUE TO SHARE WITH YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT OUR ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION, AND WILL WANT TO UNDERTAKE WITH YOU A DIALOGUE ON THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR OUR SHARED INTERESTS. I HAVE ASKED AMB HUMMEL TO DELIVER THIS LETTER AND TO OBTAIN YOUR VIEWS. UNQUOTE.

5. I WOULD WANT TO DELIVER SUCH A LETTER PERSONALLY, AND USE IT TO INITIATE A DISCUSSION WITH GENERAL ZIA.

6. I THINK IT WOULD BE WISE TO DELIVER SUCH A LETTER SOON. FOR ONE THING THE VALUE OF OUR REASSURANCES OF CONTINUED USG INTEREST IN PAKISTAN'S SECURITY AND INTEGRITY WOULD BE GREATLY INCREASED IF WE REASSERT THEM QUICKLY, AND CONVERSELY THEIR ABSENCE WILL CAUSE CONCERN. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT, THOUGH, SECRET

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IS THE FACT THAT AT THIS EARLY STAGE THE PAKS SHOULD NOT EXPECT TO HEAR CONCRETE USG PREDICTIONS OR PLANS FOR DEALING WITH THE NEW SITUATION; THUS WE ARE LIKELY TO BE ABLE TO KEEP OUR DISCUSSIONS GENERAL, AND THE GOP WILL NOT HAVE HAD TIME TO FORMULATE SPECIFIC REQUESTS. HUMMEL

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